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EXAMINING HEGEMONIC AND MONOGLOSSIC LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES, POLICIES, AND PRACTICES WITHIN BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN COLOMBIA

UN EXAMEN DE LAS IDEOLOGÍAS, POLÍTICAS Y PRÁCTICAS LINGÜÍSTICAS HEGEMÓNICAS Y MONOGLÓSSICAS EN LA EDUCACIÓN BILINGÜE EN COLOMBIA

UN EXAMEN DES IDÉOLOGIES, POLITIQUES ET PRATIQUES LINGUISTIQUES HÉGÉMONIQUES ET MONOGLLOSSIQUES SUR L'ÉDUCATION BILINGUE EN COLOMBIE

UM EXAME DAS IDEOLOGIAS LINGÜÍSTICAS, POLÍTICAS E PRÁTICAS HEGEMÔNICAS E MONOGLÓSSICAS NO ENSINO BILÍNGUE NA COLÔMBIA

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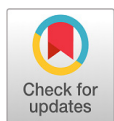
ABSTRACT

From the lens of coloniality, monoglossic and hegemonic language ideologies and policies exist within public and private bilingual education in Colombia which oppress students' and teachers' diverse linguistic identities and languaging practices. This article draws on critical scholarship which recognizes the need to decolonize language education. As such, it includes a review of key literature from the fields of language ideologies, language policy, and classroom languaging practices to consider alternative approaches to bilingual education from a heteroglossic stance, including translanguaging and critical multilingual language awareness. The literature review suggests that within the Colombian context, hegemonic and monoglossic ideologies and practices are present within international private bilingual schools and through the National Bilingual Program. In addition, an underlying logic of coloniality exists in both public and private language education as both contexts hold foreign languages, expertise, and relationships as more valuable than their local equivalents. However, recent classroom-based research in Colombia indicates promising new heteroglossic approaches which not only acknowledge the benefits but also support diverse linguistic identities and practices.

Keywords: Colombia; heteroglossia; bilingual education; language ideology; language policy; coloniality; hegemony.

RESUMEN

Según el lente de la colonialidad, en la educación bilingüe pública y privada en Colombia existen políticas e ideologías lingüísticas monoglósicas y hegemónicas que



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oprimen las diversas identidades lingüísticas y prácticas de lengua (*linguaging*) de estudiantes y docentes. Este artículo está basado en la literatura crítica que reconoce la necesidad de decolonizar la educación en lenguas. Como tal, incluye una revisión de literatura clave en los campos de las ideologías lingüísticas, la política del lenguaje y las prácticas de lengua en las aulas de clase y la utiliza para considerar enfoques alternativos a la educación bilingüe desde una postura heteroglósica, los cuales incluyen el translingüismo y la Conciencia Crítica Multilingüe. La revisión sugiere que en el contexto colombiano, hay ideologías y prácticas hegemónicas y monoglósicas tanto en las instituciones de educación bilingüe de carácter privado como en el Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo. Además, existe una lógica colonial subyacente en la educación pública y privada, pues ambos contextos consideran más valiosos los idiomas, la experiencia y las relaciones extranjeras que sus equivalentes locales. Sin embargo, investigaciones recientes en las aulas en Colombia indican nuevos enfoques heteroglósicos promisorios que no solo reconocen los beneficios, sino que también respaldan identidades y prácticas lingüísticas diversas.

Palabras clave: Colombia; heteroglosia; educación bilingüe; ideología lingüística; políticas lingüísticas; colonialidad; hegemonía.

RÉSUMÉ

Du point de vue de la colonialité, les idéologies et les politiques linguistiques monoglossiques et hégémoniques existent au sein de l'enseignement bilingue public et privé en Colombie, opprimant les diverses identités et pratiques linguistiques des élèves et des enseignants. Cet article s'appuie sur une recherche critique qui reconnaît la nécessité de décoloniser l'enseignement des langues. De ce fait, il comprend une revue de la littérature clé dans les domaines des idéologies linguistiques, de la politique linguistique et des pratiques langagières en classe pour envisager des approches alternatives à l'éducation bilingue à partir d'une position hétéroglosse, y compris le *translanguaging* et la sensibilisation à l'éveil aux langues — *Critical Multilingual Language Awareness*. La revue littéraire suggère que dans le contexte colombien, les idéologies et pratiques hégémoniques et monoglosses sont présentes dans les écoles bilingues privées internationales et ont été étendues grâce au programme national bilingue. De plus, une logique sous-jacente de la colonialité existe à la fois dans l'enseignement des langues du secteur public et privé, car les deux contextes considèrent les langues, les relations et l'expertise venues de pays étrangers comme plus valables que les indigènes. Cependant, des recherches récentes en classe en Colombie indiquent de nouvelles approches hétéroglossiques prometteuses qui non seulement reconnaissent les avantages, mais soutiennent également les diverses identités et pratiques linguistiques.

Mots clés : Colombie ; hétéroglossie ; éducation bilingue ; idéologie linguistique ; politique linguistique ; colonialité ; hégémonie.

RESUMO

Segundo a lente da colonialidade, na educação bilíngue pública e privada na Colômbia existem ideologias e políticas linguísticas monoglósicas e hegemônicas que oprimem as diversas identidades linguísticas e práticas linguísticas de alunos e professores. Este artigo parte da literatura crítica que reconhece a necessidade de decolonizar o ensino de línguas. Assim, inclui uma revisão da literatura chave nos campos das ideologias linguísticas, a política linguística e as práticas linguísticas nas salas de aula para considerar abordagens alternativas à educação bilíngue a partir de uma postura heteroglósica, incluindo o translingüismo e a linguagem.

A revisão sugere que no contexto colombiano existem ideologias e práticas hegemônicas e monoglóssicas em instituições educacionais bilíngues privadas e no Programa Nacional de Bilinguismo. Além disso, existe uma lógica colonial subjacente na educação pública e privada, uma vez que ambos os contextos consideram as línguas, a experiência e as relações estrangeiras mais valiosas que as autóctones. No entanto, pesquisas recentes em sala de aula na Colômbia indicam novas abordagens heteroglóssicas promissoras que não apenas reconhecem os benefícios, mas também apoiam diversas identidades e práticas linguísticas.

Palavras-chave: Colômbia; heteroglossia; educação bilíngue; ideologia linguística; políticas de linguagem; colonialidade; hegemonia.

Introduction

The problem of language ideologies, policies, and practices in bilingual¹ schools that treat languages as separate and hierarchical has become a central concern for education scholars as these approaches oppress students' and teachers' diverse languaging practices and identities (Cummins, 2007; de Mejía, 2006; García, 2013; Naqvi et al., 2014). In contrast, a heteroglossic view emphasizes the interconnectedness and fluidity of plurilinguals' languaging practices and linguistic identities while undermining hegemonic ideologies which valorize certain languages or language variations over others (García, 2013). While schools may include various instructional languages, they often emphasize proficiency in languages of power and not linguistic diversity or students' languaging practices (Spiro & Crisfield, 2018). As noted in their case studies of multilingual schools across the world, while students, staff, and families are often bilingual, the language ideologies reflected in schools' language policies and program models are often "monolingual in attitude and implementation" (p. 16).

Coloniality highlights monoglossic and hegemonic language ideologies, policies, and classroom languaging practices within public and private bilingual education in Colombia. Coloniality

refers to the ongoing impact of colonialism once the actual physical presence of the colonizer no longer remains. Walsh (2007) argues coloniality establishes a system of "codification of differences in ways that construct and establish a domination and inferiority based on race, serving as a fundamental criterion for the distribution of the population in ranks, places and roles with the social structure of power" (p. 229). In Latin America, Walsh argues coloniality includes a named hierarchy of social identities, from whites to mestizos to *indios* and *negros*. She connects this system to a *coloniality of knowledge*, in which Eurocentric ways of thinking are the only acceptable type of knowledge.

Monoglossic ideology signifies an understanding of languages as static and distinct, often demonstrated through one-to-one associations between nation-states and named languages (Hamel, 2008). Hamel states many Latin American governments have traditionally been suspicious of anyone that does not fit the idealized monolingual majority language norm even though there have been Indigenous and immigrant languages present in Latin America for centuries.

Within the Colombian context, Guerrero (2009) argues that the current emphasis on teaching reflects hegemonic ideologies demonstrated first by colonial powers and then by national governments, explicitly valuing Spanish over any Indigenous languages. From the Spanish colonization to Spanish as the language of education for Indigenous groups, minority languages continue to be seen as less prestigious (Usma Wilches, 2015). Guerrero (2008) points to the ongoing powerful influence of organizations like the British Council, who have promoted English as further evidence of ongoing colonial practices. Since World War II, English has risen to prominence as the preferred foreign language in Colombia (de Mejía, 2020). While Indigenous languages fought for their place within Colombian society against the imposition of Spanish, now English plays an increasingly powerful role in the competition for resources and prestige (Guerrero, 2009).

1 I use the term "bilingual" throughout this paper to refer to "the regular use of two or more languages for teaching and learning in instructional settings when bilingualism and biliteracy are two of the explicit learning goals" (Abello-Contesse, Chandler, López-Jiménez, & Chacón-Beltrán, 2013). In reference to the Colombian context, I use the term to signal the growing emphasis on Spanish-English bilingual programs, even though foreign languages have a long tradition of inclusion within the school curriculum (de Mejía, 2006). In addition, I draw on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages' (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001) distinction "between multilingualism (the coexistence of different languages at the social and individual level) and plurilingualism (the dynamic and developing linguistic repertoire of an individual user/learner)" (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 28).

Not all bilinguals are seen as equal in Colombia, as Spanish-English bilingualism is celebrated and other types of bilingualism are invisible (de Mejía, 2020). The current approach to language teaching “perpetuates the problematic hegemony of the English language in Colombian educational policy and society and marginalizes Spanish and Indigenous languages” (Ortega, 2019a, p. 1). One must interrogate language ideologies from a critical lens, acknowledging English and Spanish as imperialist languages of colonization in South America (Brovetto, 2017).

International schools exhibit a powerful influence over education because of their association with the foreign (Ortega, 2019a; Usma Wilches, 2009), yet they function under this same hierarchy of coloniality by valorizing foreign language and educators. Historically, bilingual schools in Latin America were created by European immigrant communities to meet the needs of their children or members of the economic and social elite (Hamel, 2008). In Colombia, international bilingual schools, also called elite bilingual schools, are normally started by non-nationals (de Mejía, 2002; 2013). They customarily follow a British, US or international curriculum (such as the International Baccalaureate or Cambridge University Press), alongside the national curriculum. While international schools often describe themselves as following a bilingual model, many follow a primarily English medium of instruction model, with the teaching of only Spanish language arts and Colombian social studies in Spanish (de Mejía, 2020). Most students attending international schools are now Colombian Spanish-speaking students who are interested in studying or working abroad (de Mejía, 2020). While the number of private bilingual schools in Colombia is steadily increasing, only 15% of the student population attend private schools, and a significantly smaller percentage attend elite international schools (Usma Wilches, 2015).

Bilingual education has come to the forefront of discussions across all educational sectors in

Colombia which is associated with key national and international developments. De Mejía et al. (2011) note a more focused interest in Spanish-English bilingual education in the past thirty years with the increasingly prominent role of Colombia in the global market through Colombia’s Free Trade Agreement with the United States and the invitation to join the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). With this new presumed position, English is considered essential for international commerce (de Mejía et al., 2011), a trend reflected across Latin America with an increase of teaching English at all grade levels (Howard et al., 2016).

In 2004, the Colombian government implemented the National Bilingual Program (NBP, Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo), which has undergone a number of name and policy changes, as well as regional modifications since its inception in 2004. The NBP includes the development of various Spanish-English bilingual programs in both public and private schools (Valencia, 2013) with the original stated goal for all Colombian citizens to be bilingual by 2019 (Usma Wilches, 2009). The plan included standards for language teaching and learning, a consistent approach to language assessment, and professional development for teachers (Mora et al., 2019).

While most elite international schools already followed some type of language immersion program, under the NBP², hundreds of bilingual programs have been implemented in public and private schools. However, there has been very little oversight and evaluation of the effectiveness of these programs (Rodríguez-Bonces, 2017). Camargo Cely (2018) notes at times there are schools that “claim to be bilingual regardless of not having a bilingual curriculum” (p. 120). Significant doubts

2 I use the abbreviation NBP throughout as an umbrella term as all iterations have focused on the development of a bilingual Colombia. See Bonilla Carvajal and Tejada-Sanchez (2016) and Gómez Sará (2017) for overviews of the various iterations of the policies.

remain regarding the effectiveness and growth of bilingual programs in Colombia and the ongoing presence of monoglossic and hegemonic language ideologies, policies, and practices.

Critical Framework

Critical theory draws attention to questions of power, hegemony, and injustice (Crotty, 2012) which further illuminate how a heteroglossic approach to language education belies a commitment to social change. Kincheloe et al. (2011) note that critical theories highlight:

certain groups in any society and particular societies are privileged over others, and although the reasons for this privileging may vary widely, the oppression that characterizes contemporary societies is most forcefully reproduced when subordinates accept their social status as natural, necessary, or inevitable. (p. 164)

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This critical stance illuminates how monoglossic and hegemonic language ideologies influence language policies that oppress and exclude certain languages and languaging practices.

Paulo Freire was a pillar of the critical education community, especially within the context of Latin America. One might question how Freire's (1970) work and commitment to the marginalized and oppressed could inform international schools, one of the most elite educational contexts in Latin America. However, Freire's work brings the oppressed and the oppressor together in their mutual need for liberation, as not only the oppressed need to be liberated, but the oppressors as well. Within the context of bilingual education in Colombia, who are the oppressors and who are the oppressed? While hegemonic ideologies, policies, and practices have been documented within international schools, which actors engage in the struggle of oppression? Are Colombian students oppressed if their home languages are excluded from their classrooms, even if the privilege of social class provides access to elite bilingual schools? Are teachers the oppressors if they

criticize students' accents and argue for English-only classrooms? How can teachers and students, across the spectrum of public and private schools, engage in liberation as both the oppressed and as oppressors?

Phipps (2019) contends that individuals worldwide experience the teaching and learning of languages as a colonial practice. Western democracies benefit from the exclusive teaching of colonial languages and language policies which exclude local and Indigenous languages. This erasure of languages reflects the colonial project's push for "coherence, transparency, efficiency, and control" (p. 15), yet languages cannot be limited to a particular group, such as in the preference for "native" speakers. She calls for inclusive language policies and pedagogies that include languages outside of colonial languages of power.

The task of decolonizing multilingualism requires a multitude of voices. Colombian scholars like Guerrero (2018) promote a similar stance, arguing for language teaching and research to embrace multiple ways of knowing, especially those from the South. Phipps (2019) emphasizes the importance of academics making room for colonized voices while arguing for decolonizing within the "corridors of power" (p. 3). In Colombia, the hallways of international schools are corridors of power as the language ideologies and pedagogies embraced at international schools influence educational policy across the country. Nevertheless, all schools can "serve as spaces to transform oppressive policies and foster social justice and democracy" (Ortega, 2020, p. 39).

To engage in this critical work, I consider my own positionality as a white Canadian associated with a prestigious US university. In Colombia, I am an outsider endowed with layers of privilege based on my skin color, my passport and my educational background. This privileging of northern academics over local scholars is a common phenomenon within language education in Colombia (Usma Wilches, 2015), yet this privilege can be used

to engage critically within corridors of power to explore new ways of teaching, learning, and being.

Monoglossic and Hegemonic Language Ideologies, Policies, and Practices

Monoglossic and hegemonic language ideologies, policies, and practices oppress students' and teachers' diverse linguistic identities and languaging practices. Language ideologies illuminate factors that influence the creation and appropriation of language policies and their enactment through teachers' and students' classroom languaging practices. Language policy guides the allocation of languages and the use of language by within bilingual programs. Finally, research on classroom languaging practices can promote a heteroglossic view of languages through translanguaging and Critical Multilingual Language Awareness.

The confluence of these three fields of study provides opportunities for opening ideological and implementational spaces. Hornberger (2005) describes how "ideological spaces created by language and education policies can be seen as carving out implementational spaces at classroom and community levels, but implementational spaces can also serve as wedges to pry open ideological ones" (p. 606). As schools create ideological spaces through language policies that reflect a heteroglossic view of languages, teachers can push open implementational spaces through heteroglossic practices within their classrooms.

Exposing Linguistic Hierarchies through Language Ideologies

Canagarajah (2000) broadly states "Ideologies are, for me, ways of representing and interpreting reality, and there is no life outside of them" (p. 123). More specifically, language ideologies represent ways in which societies and individuals represent and interpret language (Woolard, 1998). They inform how individuals view languages and the construction and enactment of language hierarchies in social spaces.

A hegemonic ideology denotes a hierarchical positioning of languages where particular languages or language varieties are seen as more valuable. Drawing from Gramsci's work, Ives (2013) argues the rapid spread of teaching English worldwide is not neutral, as it cannot be removed from the power relations that propel its spread. However, the focus on English supports linguistic capital dispossession as English replaces either the national or home languages (Phillipson, 2010). English as an international language of globalization has played a complex role in "redefining national and individual identities worldwide; shifting political fault lines; creating new global patterns of wealth and social exclusion; and suggesting new notions of human rights and responsibilities of citizenship" (Graddol, 2006, p. 15).

Monoglossic ideologies inform debates regarding the separation of languages in bilingual programs. At the macro societal level, Makoni and Pennycook (2007) link the perception of separate languages to the 16th century and the desire of states to consolidate political power through using standardized languages to legitimize specific nation-states. García (2009) argues this language ideology

tends to associate monolingualism with the norm, whereby the dominance of one language within the borders of a political entity is considered as more natural, more desirable, more efficient, and more productive for the sake of cohesion than reality warrants (p. 26).

At the school level, programs are designed to minimize the assumed negative interference between languages through a strict separation of instructional languages (Spiro & Crisfield, 2018). While alternative bilingual programs exist, Spiro and Crisfield claim until recently, they were seen as poor educational practice.

At the micro level, often multilinguals are seen as dual monolinguals with separate linguistic systems (Escobar & Dillard-Paltrineri, 2015; Grosjean, 1989). Nevertheless, this view does not reflect the

real-life languaging practices of plurilinguals nor their linguistic identities.

For decades, Cummins (1980) has described the dynamic relationship between plurilinguals' first and second (or more) languages. Li Wei (2017) contends while societies often acknowledge the existence of multilingualism, individuals often strongly resist the perceived mixing of languages, as "the myth of a pure form of a language is so deep-rooted that there are many people who, while accepting the existence of different languages, cannot accept the *contamination* of their language by others" (p. 14). Mignolo (2012) proposes the term monolanguaging, "speaking, writing, thinking within a single language controlled by grammar, in a way similar to a constitution's control over the state" (p. 252), noting the unnatural restriction for plurilinguals to attempt to confine themselves to one language. Monolanguaging explicitly links micro and macro level language ideologies with languaging practices.

Macro and micro language ideologies which position languages as separate and static are under mounting scrutiny. Language use in our current society of heightened global migration and digital technologies can no longer be explained through conceptualizing languages as separate and bound (Blackledge and Creese, 2013; May, 2014). Instead individuals draw on a plurilingual repertoire to communicate (Piccardo, 2013). Flores and Schissel (2014) point to a significant interest in heteroglossic ideologies, indicating a shift towards viewing "languaging as a fluid, complex, and dynamic process" (p. 461).

While monoglossic ideologies position languages as separate codes, a heteroglossic view of language emphasizes the plurality and diversity of languages, both within individuals and within communities. Heteroglossia, as developed by Bakhtin, refers to diversity present across and within languages and within individual speakers (Madsen, 2014). Madsen notes the term heteroglossia was

created by the English translators to encompass three of Bakhtin's concepts: diversity in speech, language and voice. Heteroglossia refers to various aspects of linguistic diversity and "describes how language use involves various socio-ideological languages, codes, and voices" (p. 44).

Since the Multilingual Turn, there has been a growing interest in heteroglossia as a lens to explore diverse linguistic contexts, including bilingual education. A heteroglossic ideology, according to García (2009), "considers multiple language practices in interrelationship, and leads to other constructions of bilingual education" (p. 7). To enact a heteroglossic approach, schools must acknowledge that students' languaging practices occur, not in isolation, but in interrelationship (Busch, 2014; García, 2009). A plurilingual's languaging practice reflect different norms than a monolingual speaker as they draw on a wider repertoire (García, 2009).

Problematizing Oppressive Language Policies

Since the late 20th century, there has been a movement toward critical approaches which recognize the local and global context surrounding policies and the role of actors in appropriating policies. Ricento (2000) notes how traditionally language policies were viewed from a top-down perspective which emphasized the power of the policies themselves while limiting the role of individuals while more recent critical approaches focus on the interaction between the policy and the actors who enact it. Menken and García (2010) argue language policy is a process by which a text is "interpreted and appropriated in unpredictable ways by agents who appropriate, resist, and/or change dominant and alternative policy discourses" (p. 15). Gallo and Hornberger (2017) emphasize the importance of making visible the interactions and negotiations between the possible hegemonic nature of language policy and the agency of those involved in enacting the policy. Levinson, Sutton and Winstead (2009) describe

this process as policy appropriation and emphasize the recursive nature of this relationship as actors influence the policy through its enactment.

A critical approach highlights the role of teachers as “learners—not as functionaries who follow top-down orders without question” (Kincheloe et al., 2011, p. 166). Teachers as empowered professionals engage in critical reflection about their own practice and challenge oppressive policies. Recognizing the agency of actors to enact or resist a policy demonstrates why students’ and teachers’ classroom languaging practices often do not necessarily reflect restrictive language policies.

Critical approaches to language policy place importance on a holistic understanding of policies within local and global contexts (Gallo & Hornberger, 2017; Menken & García, 2010). Canagarajah (2000) argues for an explicit link between policies surrounding learning English in local contexts and larger global movements. Within a highly mobile world, an individual’s linguistic repertoire is no longer tied to a stable geographic local context (Busch, 2014). However, school language policies are often seen as a tool to enforce a unified and standardized state language, supposedly tied to the local context. These must account for students living in a world with increasingly permeable linguistic and geographic borders.

Heteroglossic language policies allow students and teachers to leverage and develop their communicative repertoires across a variety of languages (Prasad, 2014), as they selectively draw on features from their linguistic repertoire according to their context (Blackledge & Creese, 2014). Within this approach, learners can “utilize the totality of their linguistic repertoires as learning resources” (Beeman & Urow, 2013, p. ix), as opposed to attempting to artificially separate their languages.

Within bilingual schools, language policies typically fall into two categories: language allocation policies that govern program models and language

use policies that are concerned with how teachers and students use language inside and outside of the classroom. Language allocation policies typically refer to how schools allocate languages by grade and by subject. They are often determined by the educational authorities in the country who may require certain subjects, such as social studies, be taught in the majority or official language(s) of the country (Sánchez, García & Solorza, 2018). In other cases, educational authorities may set guidelines for the percentage of time permitted for each instructional language (Naqvi et al., 2014). Yet, within these guidelines, there may be implementational spaces in which schools can soften the boundaries between languages through their language use policies.

Language use policies typically outline appropriate purposes and times for teachers and students to use different named languages within classroom and out-of-classroom spaces. In recognition of plurilingual teachers’ and students’ diverse languaging practices, schools can create language policies that open up implementational spaces which reflect heteroglossic language ideologies by allowing students to engage in multilingual meaning-making as they discover their own voices (Busch, 2014). Menken and García (2010) note that most language use policies prohibit language mixing; yet in a variety of global contexts, teachers and students engage in translanguaging to make meaning in multilingual classrooms. Menken and García highlight how teachers and students appropriate restrictive language policies to reflect their own heteroglossic languaging practices.

Within this shift toward more flexible language policies, some scholars emphasize the need for clear guidelines and consideration of context. Swain and Lapkin (2013) outline guiding principles for language use policies within one-way immersion contexts, which traditionally follow strict guidelines for language separation. While Swain and Lapkin agree that teachers need to continue to place a high priority on the use of the

target language, they encourage more flexibility in terms of policies that allow students and teachers to use their first language for specific purposes. For example, policies could allow students to use their home language during collaborative dialogue when mediating understanding of a complex idea or to make metalinguistic connections. They call for purposeful language policies with clear expectations for language use. Language allocation and use policies are potential implementational spaces for school actors to shift toward more heteroglossic approaches.

Embracing Heteroglossia through Classroom Language Practices

While there has been a great deal of interest in heteroglossia in language education, Busch (2014) argues for further documentation of how teachers and students use heteroglossic practices within their classrooms. Classroom languaging practices refer to the ways in which students and teachers engage with and through language to make-meaning. Ortega (2019b) explains, “languaging transcends the barriers of meaning-making and becomes a process in which bilingual/multilingual teachers and students engage in complex discursive practices in order to *make sense* and communicate” (p. 159).

Languaging, as opposed to language, specifically highlights the active “multiple discursive practices that individuals use, which extend beyond the sociopolitical constructions of a *language* as proposed by states and used in schools” (Menken & García, 2010, p. 259). Classroom languaging practices include instructional approaches, as teachers and students make meaning together through the language of mathematics or science, as well as social interactions between students and between students and teachers. Recognizing the role of languaging practices pushes back against monoglossic ideologies that positions monolingualism as the norm and language policies that require students and teachers to suppress their fluid languaging practices.

Translanguaging

In bilingual classrooms, translanguaging can function as an implementational space to enact more heteroglossic pedagogies. Originally introduced by Williams (1994), translanguaging referred to a pedagogical practice in Welsh bilingual schools where teachers and students moved between Welsh and English for a variety of classroom literacy tasks (Baker, 2011). While this type of language “mixing” was considered problematic at the time, Williams reframed these practices arguing that the practice provided students and teachers the opportunity to draw on their linguistic resources by generating meaning together (Li Wei, 2017).

As a theory of practice, translanguaging describes the languaging practices of plurilinguals and refers to the “deployment of a speaker’s full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages” (Otheguy et al., 2015, p. 281). While moving fluidly back and forth between languages has often been criticized as deficient, translanguaging reframes these practices as dynamic and legitimate. Translanguaging moves beyond “the exclusive focus on the standard variety [that] keeps out other languaging practices that are children’s authentic linguistic identity expression” (García, 2009, p. 36). For example, Li Wei (2017) describes how Chinese-English speakers create new words which follow the morphological rules of English yet connect with the meaning of a Chinese word. García, Johnson, Seltzer and Valdés (2017) argue that schools often undermine the multiplicity and fluidity of plurilingual students’ languaging practices and instead must challenge traditional language hierarchies.

García et al. (2017) outline the goals of translanguaging as a pedagogical practice: (1) To allow space for students to draw on the totality of their linguistic repertoires and their multilingual ways

of knowing; (2) to provide students with opportunities to build off of their current languaging practices to incorporate new languaging practices that are associated with academic contexts; and (3) to support students as they develop their multilingual identities.

Translanguaging as a pedagogy includes the creation of a classroom environment which fosters collaboration, especially through strategic groupings and projects that require communication using different types of language and skills (García et al., 2017). The classroom should communicate that all students' languages are important through a multilingual ecology that makes multilingualism visible through its use of texts, visual resources, etc.

García et al. (2017) call for teachers to plan for instruction through a translanguaging lens by including objectives that reflect appropriate content as well as objectives for general-linguistic performance, language-specific performance, and translanguaging. These objectives include students communicating at times in one named language but also provides them with the space and support to draw on all of their linguistic repertoires throughout their thinking processes.

There have been strong critics of translanguaging as a pedagogy. Some, like Leung and Valdés (2019), note that, while translanguaging is useful in contexts where students and teachers share similar linguistic repertoires, they question its use in linguistically diverse classrooms or where the development of an additional language serves the needs of all students, such as in foreign language classrooms. Acknowledging these diverse contexts, translanguaging as a pedagogy provides a framework to recognize and support the languaging practices of plurilingual students.

As a dynamic and evolving construct, translanguaging provides a lens to understand plurilinguals' languaging practices as fluid and unified, as opposed to static and separate and as pedagogy provides

various strategies for teachers to shift toward heteroglossic approaches. As noted by García and Lin (2017), translanguaging pedagogies can be transformative as they resist the hierarchy of languages common in bilingual programs while allowing students to engage in dynamic languaging practices which strengthen their linguistic repertoires.

Critical Multilingual Language Awareness

Critical Multilingual Language Awareness (CMLA) provides another lens to understand how classroom languaging practices function as implementational spaces to enact more heteroglossic pedagogies. Language awareness (LA) was originally introduced by Bolitho and Tomlinson (1980), though it became more widely known through Hawkins (1984). Hawkins proposed LA as a *bridging subject* to address a lack of coherence within language education in the UK. For Hawkins, the primary purpose of LA was to encourage students to ask questions about language and as an avenue to promote classroom discussions around linguistic diversity and prejudice.

James and Garrett (1991) described five key domains of LA: cognitive, affective, performance, social, and power. The domains were not mutually exclusive nor in conflict with the goal of learning a specific named language. Instead, the five areas were domains of competence in which all students could develop their language awareness to support their plurilingual repertoire.

Attention to linguistic diversity and asymmetrical power relations were present in both Hawkins' (1984) and James and Garrett's (1991) conceptions of LA. Fairclough (1995) pushed these ideas further, calling for the development of critical language study which "highlights how language conventions and language practices are invested with power relations and ideological processes which people are often unaware of" (p. 7). Alim (2010) promoted Critical Language Awareness (CLA), arguing researchers must collaborate with teachers to uncover ideologies of linguistic

supremacy which elevate a particular language variety. While Fairclough and Alim called for centering power within the field of LA, recent reviews have criticized LA scholarship for not paying sufficient attention to issues of power (Fairclough, 2014; Svalberg, 2016).

García (2017) draws explicit attention to questions of power in her call for CMLA. She argues schools must draw students' attention to multilingualism in societies and how language has traditionally been constructed to privilege certain groups. By calling for teachers to become aware of linguistic variety within and beyond their specific classroom or school, García pushes for the inclusion of languages that may have been excluded from the school setting. García provides several methods for teachers to learn about cultural and linguistic diversity within their classrooms, schools, and society, such as a critical sociolinguistic study of their specific context.

García (2017) also calls for a recognition that schools often promote certain languages and practices as desired, and in turn, delegitimize languaging practices which do not fit within this presumed norm. While recognizing schools should help students develop standard varieties of named languages, García calls on schools to see students' languaging practices as valid and as a tool for learning and creativity. García and Lin (2017) argue that educators can foster linguistically expansive learning spaces that support collaborative cross-linguistic comparison across students' different languages. Through both acknowledging histories of cultural and linguistic exclusion and devaluing and then creating spaces for this type of diversity, García (2017) argues that teachers can engage all students in developing a consciousness of language as social practice and a voicing of their own multilingual experiences, thus generating not only a new order of discourse, but also a new praxis, capable of changing the social order of what it means to "language" in school. (p. 7)

Recently Hélot and Prasad (2018) proposed to reconceptualize the five domains of LA in relationship to García's (2017) call to foster critical multilingual language awareness in multilingual school contexts. Prasad and Lory (2020) draw attention to the power domain, which they define as attention to power relations associated with languages, language speakers, and language learning. They argue that questions of power are at the center of developing CMLA and serve as a lens to focus attention on the relationships between language and social dynamics of power and inequality. In conversation together, translanguaging and CMLA illustrate how classroom languaging practices function as implementational spaces to enact more heteroglossic pedagogies.

A Closer Look at Colombia

Hegemonic and monoglossic language ideologies, policies, and practices exist within the field of language education in Colombia in both the international school context and the National Bilingual Program.

International Schools

International bilingual schools in Colombia have been heavily criticized for monoglossic orientations that separate instructional languages that oppress students' and teachers' plurilingual repertoires and hegemonic views by prioritizing English at the expense of other languages (de Mejía, 2006). Within bilingual schools, students' languages are often positioned as separate, as opposed to seeing the languages as part of students' unified linguistic repertoires (de Mejía, 2013). The majority of bilingual schools separate languages to the point of having two distinct language programs operating within one school, with disconnected staff, curriculum, and at times, conflicting pedagogical approaches (Hamel, 2008; de Mejía, 2005). Hamel (2008) argues monoglossic approaches that attempt to separate instructional languages are often based on a lack of understanding about bilingualism and folk theories about

the potential dangers of language mixing. Hamel states simply that

A bilingual program that raises barriers between languages, which fails to organize its syllabus in an integrative way and to build multiple transfer routes of knowledge and competencies between them, is destined to fail in the long run, no matter what other advantages it may offer on a daily basis. (p. 83)

De Mejía and Montes Rodríguez (2008) note that instructional languages are typically allocated along subject areas such as math and science taught in English and social studies and physical education taught in Spanish. This division of certain academic subjects taught only in English positions English as more suitable for talking about scientific and abstract concepts (Gómez Sará, 2017). De Mejía and Montes Rodríguez contend that schools could consider teaching a subject using both languages while following the school's model for the overall breakdown of time in each instructional language. The majority of students learning English within Colombia are learning it as an additional language, and therefore, bilingual schools should encourage students to draw on their knowledge of Spanish (Ordóñez, 2011).

In some cases, monoglossic language ideologies have been further perpetuated by research conducted within private bilingual schools. For example, in a study about fifth grade students in a private bilingual school in Colombia, Ávila (2010) argues for an approach that discourages students from moving freely between languages in order to avoid a supposed negative impact on students' English proficiency skills. Ávila positions students' languages not as resources within their communicative repertoires but as separate, and even more problematic, as being in competition with each other.

In contrast, some scholars and practitioners argue for policies of language separation are necessary to protect the target language. For example, within the Colombian context, where English is generally not spoken within society, they argue that if

students are allowed to draw on Spanish during English instructional time, the practice may not allow for sufficient time in the target language. In recent interviews with international school administrators in Latin America, many were open to more flexible language policies, yet they questioned the potential negative impact on students' English proficiency. Both scholarly discussions and anecdotal evidence indicate the need to consider the context in which language policies are created and appropriated as well as the particular language goals of the actors within each school context.

Alongside a monoglossic language ideology, many private schools in Colombia often demonstrate a hegemonic language ideology through their prioritization of English over other languages and their hiring of foreign English teachers. Within this established linguistic hierarchy, English teachers, particularly so-called "native English speakers" from certain countries are seen as more valuable than their Colombian counterparts (Camargo Cely, 2018; Guerrero, 2018). Foreign teachers are often paid more and given less responsibilities, even if they are teaching the same types of classes (de Mejía, 2002). Through their program models and hiring choices, international bilingual schools "continue to propagate the idea that English is best" (Ortega, 2020, p. 41).

This emphasis on teaching English is often tied primarily to its perceived economic value (Camargo Cely, 2018; de Mejía & Montes Rodríguez, 2008). In their study of a private school in Bogotá, Rodríguez-Boncos (2017) surveyed parents and teachers regarding their personal beliefs about bilingualism and bilingual education. The results indicated parents believed the primary advantage of a bilingual program for their children was future competitiveness in the global market. When asked the primary purpose of becoming bilingual, both parents and teachers selected being prepared to work abroad over developing interpersonal skills or valuing a different culture. While scholars debate whether or

not learning English actually leads to increased social mobility and opportunities (Fandiño Parra, 2014; Usma Wilches, 2009), parents “continue to associate knowledge of the English language with economic competitiveness” (Rodríguez-Bonces, 2017, p. 239).

This instrumental valuing of English within private schools matches the government’s push for teaching English for economic reasons. Elite private schools are further advantaged by these hierarchies as the schools and their graduates benefit from educational policies and requirements focused on English teaching (Ortega, 2019a), which will be further explored in the next section on the NBP. In sum, monoglossic and hegemonic language ideologies are common within the context of international bilingual schools in Colombia. These ideologies position students’ languages as separate and valorize English at the expense of national and regional languages.

262 *National Bilingual Program*

A similar pattern of monoglossic and hegemonic ideologies, policies, and practices proliferate within public schools in Colombia through the NBP. In terms of a monoglossic approach, Gómez Sará (2017) argues the separation of languages is apparent throughout the program which emphasizes the learning of Spanish and English as two separate linguistic codes, without consideration for how these codes interact. Bonilla Carvajal and Tejada-Sanchez (2016) further contend that the NBP positions bilingualism as equivalent to speaking English with no regard for the multilingualism present in Colombia nor the interaction of English with languages already spoken by students. Usma Wilches (2015) posits that many local scholars, “question the very adoption of the term *bilingualism* in a country like Colombia where Spanish has been the dominant language and English is learned and used as a foreign language” (p. 12).

The NBP also reflects hegemonic ideologies as it valorizes languages, expertise, and relationships

from outside the Colombian context. First, the NBP reflects hegemonic ideologies as it privileges English as a foreign language at the expense of local Indigenous languages and Spanish (Gómez Sará, 2017; Usma Wilches, 2015). As noted by Guerrero (2008), the NBP’s valuing of English at the expense of other languages is a direct descendant of the hegemonic ideologies demonstrated by colonial powers who explicitly valued Spanish over any Indigenous languages. Since 1991, the Colombian Constitution explicitly acknowledges the rights of Indigenous communities to use their own languages in schooling, yet the NBP values Spanish-English bilingualism at the expense of any other types.

Second, the NBP was based primarily on foreign expertise and models. The NBP uses the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, Council of Europe, 2001, 2018) as the standard by which to measure teacher and students’ English language proficiency, stating students should have a B1 level of competency in English, by the time they graduated from high school (Maturana Patarroyo, 2011). Many scholars dispute the use of the CEFR, as the NBP did not take into consideration whether or not it was appropriate for the Colombian context, nor does it recognize key issues of power which must be considered when implementing an external instrument (Bonilla Carvajal & Tejada-Sanchez, 2016; Camargo Cely, 2018; Correa & Usma Wilches, 2013; González, 2010; Usma Wilches, 2009, 2015). In addition, the extensive local expertise of researchers within Colombia was excluded from this process. According to Correa and Usma Wilches (2013), the voices of English teachers, scholars, school administrators, and Indigenous community leaders were all discounted in the design, planning, and implementation of the NBP.

Finally, the NBP also prioritizes relationships outside of the local context, specifically through emphasizing the role of English in providing access and encouraging productivity with the global

market (Camargo Cely, 2018; Guerrero, 2009). According to Usma Wilches, “the emphasis in Colombia on specific language policies associated with English responds to international agreements on the educational models required at times of economic globalization and transnational transactions and interactions” (2015, p. 27). These relationships are also noted within the realm of transnational power relationships between organizations like the World Bank, the United Nations, and the OECD, as these organizations require countries to apply their policies to receive political or financial support (Usma Wilches, 2015).

The importance of language in helping Colombians gain access to the global market was frequently used as a key rationale for NBP, as shown in the following quote from a Ministry of Education document:

To communicate in a foreign language is an indispensable ability in the world today. Not only does it allow for academic and laboral mobility; it is also one of the bases on which to build the competitive capability of a society and a tool to open oneself to new cultures and new experiences. (Ministerio de Educación, 2006, p. 54)

Rodríguez-Bonces (2017) describes one of the NBP’s stated goals as the acquisition of at least one foreign language for all citizens for them to become active and productive participants in the globalized world. The NBP promotes language learning from “a utilitarian perspective which justifies learning English on the basis of economic competitiveness and improved quality of life” (p. 222), regardless of the detriment to native languages and local cultures. Instead of a focus on the various other goals for learning a language, including humanitarian, social or cognitive goals, the NBP narrowly associates languages with competition within the global market (Usma Wilches, 2015).

Ortega (2020) claims public school teachers often reflect this focus on the teaching of English for its economic benefits as also shown by de Mejía and Montes Rodríguez (2008) within the private

school context. Guerrero (2008) ironically notes that Spanish has the third highest number of speakers in the world, yet Spanish is “not enough for Colombians to have access to the *current world*” (p. 33). According to the NBP, and various other national and international policies and organizations, only English will provide access to the global market.

This utilitarian positioning of English simply as means to access the global market is more than simply a problematic ideology; enacted through the NBP, these ideologies impact the lives of students and their families across Colombia. Usma Wilches (2015) argues the NBP exacerbates social inequality by perpetuating the advantages of an elite group of Colombians who attend international schools, are fluent in English, and have access to various forms of capital. Usma Wilches notes the following:

In the context of globalization and competitiveness, and when the government is setting the stage for those who speak two languages, being able to speak English will represent an asset, while being monolingual will become an enormous drawback for those who lack social and economic capital (social connections and money) (...) This is why not granting all students within the private and public system the same education quality and the possibility to be proficient in English is placing them into different tracks with thine global and national job market. (p. 51)

The implementation of the NBP led to a further “breach between public and private institutions (...) as a consequence of the uneven conditions in which English as a foreign language is taught in Colombia” (Usma Wilches, 2015, p. 10). While in theory the NBP applies to both public and private schools, elite private schools often operate outside of its guidelines because they already have higher standards for language acquisition. For example, international schools often employ foreign teachers who are not required to demonstrate or attain any level of Spanish proficiency. However, according to the NBP, all Colombian teachers, not just English teachers, must receive a CEFR Level A2

English certification for the school to be classified as a bilingual program (Rodríguez-Bonces, 2017). Private schools already designed with intensive language programs and the associated resources benefit as they match the government's plan for bilingualism. The narrow definition of Spanish-English bilingualism through the NBP further entrenches the privilege of Colombian elites and leads to increased social inequality as not all schools have the resources available to implement the plan successfully (Rodríguez-Bonces, 2017).

This breach is in line with neoliberal policies implemented across South America since the 1990s which emphasize individualism, competition, private capital, and capitalism (Díaz Maggioli, 2017). According to Usma Wilches (2015), the emphasis on the universal need for English and the failure to provide the resources and support to public schools to enact the NBP, further undermined the public school system in Colombia as it positions the public school system as unprepared for the global market and in need of reform, compared to the private system. This leads to the consolidation of the private system, particularly for those within the upper socioeconomic status. This enacts a problematic cycle in which neoliberal regulations are enforced, teachers react against them, quality in the public system is affected, parents find attractive responses in the private sector, and the states finds new motivations to continue to cut public expending and exert stringent control over school and teachers by adopting more top-down policies (Usma Wilches, 2015, p. 48).

The teaching of English for its assumed economic power is not unique to the Colombian context. Instead, the rapid spread of English is closely linked to the shifts toward globalization being experienced around the world (Ricento, 2010). From the outsourcing of cheaper labor to the development of communication and information technologies, the learning of English is now seen by many, and promoted by governments around the world, as an essential skill. Throughout

South America, English continues to be positioned by many as primarily a tool to facilitate economic and technological exchange at a global level (Pozzi, 2017). According to Kamhi-Stein et al. (2017), governments promote English teaching for economic reasons, without providing the necessary contextualization of programs, policies, and resources which allow disenfranchised groups to benefit. Banfi (2017) argues that national governments throughout the region continue to support the idea promoted by international organizations that English language skills are essential for all citizens to "fully participate in the economic benefits derived from the more fluid exchanges made possible by the process of globalisation of the economy and wider access to information technologies" (p. 14). She notes there is an increasing push for English language teaching in younger grades and in public school contexts, yet the necessary conditions for the successful teaching of English are not present. Nonetheless, the policies themselves give the impression that students have access to language instruction, a perceived improvement from the past, while in reality, they often do not have access, or the access is very limited compared to the private sector. While English is often promoted as a means to provide access to all for the global market, the South American government's "linguistic policies that aim to provide access to global forces do not always successfully include local populations in globalizing processes or grant them equal treatment across socioeconomic lines" (Pozzi, 2017, p. 142).

This promotion of English skills as a universal requirement within a globalized world, obscures the reality that globalization has not provided equal access to the learning of English for all (Usma Wilches, 2015). Instead, while neoliberal ideologies "have favoured the consolidation of English as the new imperial language" (Usma Wilches, 2015, p. 29), the spread of English has not led to more equity either between or within nations. Nevertheless, Kamhi-Stein et al. (2017) argue that the teaching of English in South

America could play a role in empowerment and the repositioning of countries if it is seen both as a cognitive skill and as a tool in the “promotion of a more socially just approach to our understanding of the world” (p. 3). The extensive critiques of the NBP’s emphasis on external expertise, languages, and relationships and its ongoing positioning of English simply as a tool to access the global market without addressing the ongoing inequities perpetuated by this approach indicate the NBP is not yet promoting a more socially just world but instead further perpetuating social inequities.

Hegemonic and monoglossic language ideologies, policies and practices are seen across the spectrum of private and public bilingual programs in Colombia. Their presence connects to larger questions about power and access within our globalized society. While these issues must continue to be interrogated, there is promising evidence of shifts occurring within bilingual education as Colombian teachers and students resist these problematic narratives.

Promising Shifts

While monoglossic and hegemonic language ideologies are common, there is a growing recognition of the need to shift toward heteroglossic approaches that affirm and leverage students’ communicative repertoires while bringing attention to questions of language and power. Within the context of public schools in Colombia, emerging research indicates how public-school teachers work to resist the monoglossic ideologies of the nbp. In an article about the creative use of pedagogical strategies by English teachers in rural Colombian schools, Cruz Arcila (2018) notes how one teacher encouraged her students to move freely between Spanish and English during her English class. The teacher believed it was important for students to be able to see how the learning of English was connected to their language resources and not view English as a separate entity. Cruz Arcila notes how the teacher’s instructional choices coincide with translanguaging as a

pedagogical approach, without the teacher necessarily tying the practice to the specific term. He argues for further research to recognize how some English teachers in Colombia are engaging in heteroglossic teaching practices, whether they are in line or not with the government’s official approach to English language teaching.

Some research has highlighted the advent of heteroglossic pedagogies within private bilingual schools in Colombia as well. In their case studies of eight Spanish-English bilingual schools, de Mejía et al. (2012) note that some teachers use a strategy called, *Preview/Review* in which they first introduce a topic to students in Spanish and have them participate in a number of activities and then present the next related lesson in English and focus on activities to demonstrate and expand their understanding. In a science class, a teacher adapted a group presentation that was supposed to be taught solely in English through encouraging students to freely move between languages as they discussed and prepared for their presentation. While research about heteroglossic pedagogies is limited within the region, de Mejía et al.’s study indicates the possibility of such practices within bilingual schools. While there is evidence of ongoing problematic ideologies and practices within bilingual schools throughout Colombia, these few studies highlight the possibility of more equitable approaches.

Conclusion

Monoglossic and hegemonic language ideologies, policies, and practices which exist within bilingual education in Colombia oppress students’ and teachers’ diverse linguistic identities and languaging practices. The logic of coloniality underlies both private and public contexts which are defined by a hierarchy which places English as a foreign language as superior. At times, within the Colombian context, international schools are criticized for being the epitome of foreign imposition; yet through the lens of coloniality, it becomes clear how international schools

operate according to the same colonial hierarchy of white Eurocentric knowledge and educators. International schools must recognize their role in perpetuating coloniality, while recognizing that they, like those schools following the NBP, both perpetuate and themselves are oppressed by systems of coloniality.

The lens of critical scholarship highlights the need for deep engagement with decolonizing ideologies, policies, and practices which shift toward a heteroglossic understanding of language. While most scholarship has focused on the presence of monoglossic and hegemonic approaches within Colombia, recent studies point to individual teachers shifting away from these oppressive ideologies and practices. However, further empirical studies at the classroom, school and large-scale national level are urgently required to explore how actors within both public and private bilingual programs in Colombia might engage with more heteroglossic and equitable approaches to bilingual education.

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